

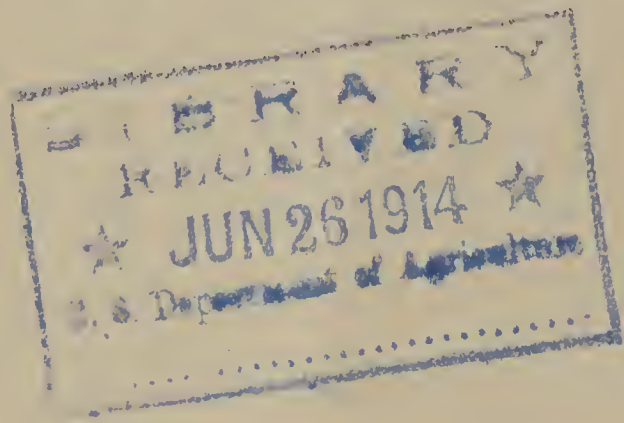
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
FOREST SERVICE.

OUR TIMBER SUPPLY.



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OUR TIMBER SUPPLY.

AMOUNT AND OWNERSHIP.

The total amount of standing timber in the United States is close to 2,900 billion board feet.

At least 76 per cent of this, or 2,200 billion feet, is privately owned.

About 21 per cent, or 600 billion feet, is in the National Forests.

About 3 per cent, or 90 billion feet, is in some other form of public ownership—Federal, State, or municipal.

The original stand of timber in the United States has been roughly estimated to have been 5,200 billion feet, covering approximately 800,000,000 acres.

Fire has destroyed at least as much of this as lumbering has utilized.

As much again has been wasted.

WHERE IT IS.

Almost five-elevenths of the country's timber is in the Pacific northwest (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and northern California), where the chief trees are Douglas fir, western red cedar, western yellow pine, sugar pine, larch, and redwood.

Of the remaining timber, a little more than half, or about one-fourth of the total supply, is in the Southern pine region (Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Florida, Texas, Alabama, and parts of Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Missouri), where the principal trees are longleaf, shortleaf, and loblolly pine (all marketed under the name of yellow pine), cypress, and gum, oak, and other hardwoods.

The Lake States contain perhaps 100 billion feet of timber, mostly white, jack, and Norway pine, hemlock, balsam, beech, birch, and maple.

The Northeastern States are the chief source of supply for spruce, from which most of our paper pulp is made.

Most of the National Forests are in the mountains of the West, following in general the Rocky Mountains and Pacific coast ranges from Washington, Idaho, and Montana to southern California, Arizona, and New Mexico. A few are in Arkansas, Florida, Nebraska, Michigan, Minnesota, Alaska, and Porto Rico.

States which have set aside forest reserves of their own are California, Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wisconsin.

ANNUAL CUT.

The annual cut of sawtimber in the United States is approximately 43 billion feet.

At this rate, if there were no new growth, our present timber supply would last about 65 years.

Though it contains practically half of all the standing timber in the country, the Pacific northwest at present furnishes only one-sixth of the annual cut.

The southern pine region is the present center of the lumber industry, furnishing about 45 per cent of the annual production.

The Lake States, once the center of lumbering, now supply a relatively small amount of timber as compared with the Southeast, and less than the Pacific States.

In 1912 the chief lumber-producing States, in the order of their importance, were Washington, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Arkansas, Virginia, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Alabama, West Virginia, California, and Florida.

Yellow pine furnishes more than 37 per cent of all our lumber, and Douglas fir more than 13 per cent.

Washington supplies the most Douglas fir and western red cedar; Louisiana, the most yel-

low pine, tupelo, and cypress; Mississippi, the most cottonwood; Arkansas, the most hickory and red gum; Wisconsin, the most basswood, birch, and hemlock; Michigan, the most beech, elm, and maple; Minnesota, the most white pine; and West Virginia, the most oak, yellow poplar, and chestnut.

The people of the United States use in a normal year about 40 billion feet of lumber, 90,000,000 cords of firewood, 135,000,000 hewn railroad ties, 889,000,000 posts, 3,500,000 telegraph and telephone poles, 1,686,000,000 staves, 136,000,000 sets of heading, 353,000,000 barrel hoops, 3,300,000 cords of native pulpwood, 165,000,000 cubic feet of round mine timbers, and 1,250,000 cords of wood for distillation.

The yearly growth of wood in our forests has been estimated to average not more than 12 cubic feet per acre. We are taking out about 36 cubic feet per acre, and are therefore cutting the forests three times as fast as they grow.

FUTURE SUPPLY.

Through the inevitable economic development of the country, the amount of land chiefly valuable for growing forests may be expected

to shrink from its present extent of 550,000,000 acres (including farm woodlots) to approximately 450,000,000 acres, or, assuming a population of 150,000,000, to 300 acres for every 100 inhabitants.

To maintain our present per capita consumption of 260 cubic feet of wood, however, there would have to be 2,166 acres of forest for every 100 inhabitants, or more than seven times the probable future area.

The present forest area is 775 acres for every 100 inhabitants. It meets our own needs only because it still offers a supply of virgin timber, the accumulated capital of centuries, to supply the deficiency.

With increasing scarcity as this supply is drawn lower, economy in the use of woods will be forced. As wood becomes more expensive, growing it will become more profitable. Thus eventually a balance between production and consumption will be reached.

A supply of wood sufficient for our future needs will be the result of:

1. Reducing the per capita consumption.
2. Protecting the forests from fire.
3. Increasing the annual growth per acre through the practice of forestry.

By greater economy in the use of wood the per capita consumption could easily be reduced from the present figure of 260 cubic feet to 150 or even 100 cubic feet without hardship. We use only 50 per cent of the total volume of the tree and leave 50 per cent to be wasted.

Forest fires every year destroy, on an average, 12 billion board feet of timber. If the forests were protected there would be just this much more timber available. Protection from fire gives the forests a chance to grow.

The aim of forestry is to bring the forest up to its highest state of productiveness and keep it there. In the United States, where forestry is not practiced except on Government and State lands, the estimated annual production, as stated before, is 12 cubic feet per acre. In Saxony, where forestry has been practiced for many years, the annual production is 93 cubic feet.

If our final forest area of 450,000,000 acres is made to yield an average of 50 cubic feet per acre, as it can by the practice of scientific methods, there will be enough wood for a per capita consumption of 150 cubic feet by 150,000,000 people.

